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ABSTRACT

Beginning principals in developing countries face drastically different problems than do their counterparts in developed countries. This paper presents findings of a study that surveyed Kenyan secondary school principals about the challenges they encountered. The questionnaire was sent to 200 secondary school principals--100 beginning and 100 experienced principals--from all 8 provinces in Kenya. A total of 142 responses were received, a return rate of 71 percent. The most serious problems facing beginning principals in Kenya included students who could not pay school fees and buy books, a shortage of school equipment and physical facilities, a lack of staff accommodation and playgrounds, students who must travel long distances, and the use of English as a medium of instruction. The problems were attributed to the educational system's failure to provide adequate financial support. It is recommended that beginning principals be provided with induction programs and inservice activities. Two tables are included. (Contains 34 references.) (LMI)

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PROBLEMS FACING BEGINNING SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN KENYA

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Problems Facing Beginning Principals in Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya face problems that drastically differ from problems faced by their counterparts in developed countries such as the U.S.A, U.K. and Australia. In this study, the most serious problems facing beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya include inter alia: students who cannot pay school fees and buy books, shortage of school equipment, shortage of physical facilities, lack of staff accommodation, lack of playgrounds, students travelling long distances, and use of English as a medium of instruction. These problems, were ascribed to the educational system's failure to provide enough financial support for schools. And while there is little that beginning principals can do about the financial problems, they should be made aware of them.

1. Introduction

> Entry is a quintessential situation, when the hopes and fears of all the years are again rekindled, when the dreams and visions of the person(principal) entering and the organization(school) inviting are aroused, when all the anxieties of facing the unknown are at their highest pitch, and when one experiences the ritual of the mysteries of this particular tribe (Tobert, 1982)

There is an increasing recognition among scholars and researchers in the field of educational administration that entering the principalship is an emotional-laden situation and that the school principal is the key ingredient for success in school. In addition, more researchers are becoming aware of the unique problems faced by people beginning careers as school principals. However, despite this growing awareness of the importance of the school principal and the unique problems faced by new principals, very little is known in general about problems facing school principals in developing countries. Similarly, very little is known about problems facing beginning school principals in a developing country like Kenya.

A growing body of research on effective schools and recent calls for school reform have identified the principal as the key person in the effort to improve the quality of school(Brookover et al. 1979; Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980; Lipham, 1981; Buckley, 1985; Daresh, 1986; Weindling & Earley, 1987; Anderson, 1990; Van der Westhuizen, 1988, 1991; Van der Westhuizen and Harrison, 1989; Dadey & Harber, 1991, Beeson & Matthews, 1992; Dadey & Harber, 1993, Legotlo, 1994; Daresh & Playko, 1994, Kitavi, 1995). In his report on the role of the school principal (Weldy, 1979) captures the importance of the men and women who occupy the critical position of the principal by asserting that:

> In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school... It is his/her leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for the learning, the level of professionalism and morale of the teachers and degree of concern for what students may or may not become... If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child centered place, it has a reputation for excellence...If students are performing to the best of their ability, one can always point to the principal's leadership as the key to that success(pp.1,2)

Yet, despite the importance of the principalship, the means by which most principals in developing countries like Kenya are trained, selected , inducted and inserviced are ill-suited to the development of effective and efficient school managers. Bogonko(1992) and Kitavi(1995) point out that in 1985 Kenya ushered in a new educational system(8-4-4). Regrettably, neither the old nor the new educational system gives attention to either formal

training or induction of beginning school principals. Traditionally, deputy principals as well as good assistant teachers are appointed to the principalship without any leadership training including managerial competencies but very little is known about their entry year problems. As Van der Westhuizen(1988) points out, good teaching abilities are not necessarily an indication that the person appointed will be a capable educational manager.

Education in many developing countries like Kenya is a precious commodity and is given the first priority. For instance, the government of Kenya spends more than half of the Kenya's annual budget on education. However, inspite of this high budgetary allotment on education, little is known about the problems faced by the individuals (principals) who are responsible for implementing educational goals.

2. Current Practices of Principal Training in Kenya.

Preservice training of school principals in Kenya is not required(Kitavi, 1995). The past one and half decade, from 1980, has witnessed considerable efforts by the Ministry of Education in Kenya in providing in-service management training for heads of schools. It has been recognized that changes within the society and within the educational system itself requires continuous in-servicing of staff to enable them acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes for new roles(Lodiaga & Olembo,1991).

The present Kenya government development strategy of a District Focus for Rural Development began in 1983, and the implementation of the 8.4.4 system of education from 1985 placed additional responsibilities on educational managers and administrators(Lodiaga & Olembo, 1991). In 1988, the government of Kenya established the Kenya Education Staff Institute(KESI) to offer in-service training for the heads of educational institutions including school principals(Kamunge, 1988). Further, Kamunge(1988) on behalf of the government recommended that the role of the Kenya Education Staff Institute be expanded and diversified to develop both the serving and potential heads. Thus, while KESI has been in existence for more than a decade, recent information indicates that it still provides in-service training largely to practising heads and very little to beginning or future or heads(Kitavi, 1995). This, despite the fact that these educational managers are expected to participate meaningfully in the planning, implementation and evaluation of educational programs and projects as soon as they become heads. Thus, the first problem these new educational leaders face is lack of training.

Although there are few studies that have been done about education in developing countries including Kenya (for example: Riggs, 1964, Elliot,1966; Lulat, 1988, Rondinelli, Middleton, and Verspoor,1990; Chapman and Carrier,1990, and Lockheed and Vespoor,1991) none of these studies focuses on the role of principals or beginning

principals per se. Instead most of these studies deal with general improvement of education in developing countries and the focus is typically on the teachers, students, schools and the government. The role of especially the beginning principals in all these studies is virtually ignored. Additionally, the World Bank has long acknowledged the vital relationship between education and economic development and the central importance for both in developing countries(Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991; World Bank, 1989; 1990; Onyago 1988; Rondinelli, 1989; Kiggundu, 1989;). These studies have, however, fallen short of seeing the principal as the key catalyst for educational development in developing countries. Similarly, these studies have failed to look into the problems facing especially beginning principals and the skills they require in order to be effective and efficient. This, despite the efforts made in developed countries to unravel the concerns and surprises of new principals. Such neglect is inexcusable and not understandable in light of the recent research that points to the principal as the central person for school improvement.

Dadey and Harber(1991:35) list international agencies which have supported upgrading for school heads in some African Commonwealth countries including Kenya. Sadly, the focus on these programs is on upgrading practicing heads and not the future or the beginning ones. In 1985, the Caribbean Society of Educational Administrators in association with the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administrators and the Faculty of Education, University of West Indies, Cave Hill, sponsored an international symposium on the Professional Preparation and Development of Educational Administrators in Developing Area. Out of the fourteen papers presented, none of them addressed on the problems of beginning principals. In 1991, the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education and the Commonwealth Secretariat Education Program jointly organized a workshop on Teacher Management in Kadoma, Zimbabwe. Although thirteen of the participants and resource persons came from countries of Commonwealth Africa, none of them touched on the difficulties faced by new heads. More recently, Harber and Dadey's(1993) study on headteachers in Botswana and Ghana focused on practicing headteachers as well. Suffice it to say that, this lack of attention underestimates the importance of the beginning principal. Except for the doctoral studies of Legotlo(1994) on an induction program for newly appointed school principals in Bophuthatswana(South Africa) and Kitavi(1995) on the induction of beginning school principals in Kenya, very little is documented about problems facing beginning principals in developing countries per se.

3.Current Research on Problems facing Beginning Principals

Research on the role of the principals in improving schools and problems faced by new principals is compelling(Legotlo, 1994; Kitavi, 1995). Virtually every line of inquiry identifies school principals as the key ingredient for successful schools and that

there are obstacles faced by new principals in their transition to the principalship. A burgeoning body of empirical research from some developed countries like the USA (Anderson, 1990; Parkay & Rhodes, 1992; Daresh & Playko, 1992 & 1994), UK(Weindling & Earley,1987), and Australia(Beeson & Matthews, 1992) are unraveling the concerns of beginning principals.

Duke(1985), Daresh(1986), Weindling and Earley(1987), and Beeson and Matthews(1992) all describe the world of novice principals as one that is filled with considerable anxiety, frustration and professional isolation. Thus, an increasingly clear picture shows new principals who cannot serve as instructional leaders, who tend to seek moral and ethical identities and suffer from feeling of stress associated with their new role(Daresh & Playko, 1992). DuBose(1986) and Anderson(1989) studies found that beginning principals experienced job specific problems related to instructional programs, students, personnel, financial resources, community relations and transportation. Daresh and Playko(1994) identify problems facing new principals as (1) role clarification about understanding who they were, now that they were principals and they were to make use of their authority (2) limited technical expertise about how to do the things they were supposed to; and (3) difficulties with adjustment to the profession and individual school system. All these studies axiomatically affirm that beginning principals face problems which hinder them from being effective educational managers. These findings are, however, based on studies of beginning principals in developed nations.

However, issues that may be considered problematic for beginning principals in developed countries may be different from those facing their counterparts in developing countries. Similarly, those induction programs and strategies that are labelled good abroad cannot simply be transferred and implemented in developing country without modification to suit local needs. Additionally, it would be presumptuous to prescribe common problems and standard training programs including induction strategies for beginning principals since their problems and needs are not standard both in terms of individuals, countries, and time.

Given the importance of the principalship and the potential impact of the transition period for new principals in developing countries like Kenya, this research study focuses on the needs, concerns , challenges, and problems faced by novice principals during their first year in the principals, chair. With a better understanding of the problems beginning principals face, educational systems in developing countries like Kenya may consider altering their current practices of preparing, selecting and inducting beginning principals. In addition, colleges, universities and other educational institutes involved in the professional development of principals may use this study's findings to redesign programs that will assist individuals after they assume their position as principals.

Furthermore, this study attemptes to heighten the plight of the forgotten men and women (beginning principals) in developing countries like Kenya by drawing attention to some of the entry year problems. It also serves to fill the void in research on beginning principalship in developing countries and at the same time contributes to the general knowledge base in relation to beginning principalship in developed countries.

3 Methodology

3.1 Subjects

There are eight provinces in Kenya. Therefore, the selected population of this study is comprised of two stratified random samples of beginning and experienced secondary school principals drawn from each province. Beginning principals in this study refer to those secondary school principals appointed for the first time as principals between June 1991 and June 1994. Thus they have 0-3 years of principalship. Experienced principals refer to those secondary school principals with three or more years of principalship experience. Experienced principals were used in this study as the control group and were asked to give their views on problems.

The sample of principals who took part in the study was selected from the list of beginning and experienced principals supplied by the Teachers Service Commission(TSC). From the record of beginning principals(N=413), a stratified random sample of (n=100) beginning principals were selected from all the eight(8) provinces of Kenya. From the record of experienced principals (N=800), another stratified random sample of experienced principals(n=100) was selected as a control group from all the eight provinces and they were asked to give their views regarding problems facing beginning principals.

Both beginning and experienced principals were selected at random, with provisions to ensure that the sample was broadly representative of the variety of principals and schools in the entire educational system in Kenya. This involved making certain that there was a reasonable geographic spread from each province and district as well. From the total subjects(200), 142(71%) usable questionnaires were returned. Of the total respondents (142), 65(65%) were beginning principals and 77(77%) were experienced principals.

3.2. Questionnaire

A thirteen-page questionnaire with 102 items was developed and administered to 200 subjects in order to collect information about the principals' backgrounds and their views on the problems

facing beginning principals. Two important strategies were employed in the development of the questionnaire: Firstly, the issues in the literature on problems facing beginning principals were examined and analyzed. Secondly, the questionnaire was designed similar in pattern to the beginning principals' studies carried out by Weindling and Earley(1987) in the U.K and Legotlo(1994) in South Africa(North West Province). Education must be understood in relation to the society in which it is built and therefore problems facing beginning principals in developing countries must be seen in relation to the societies in which they operate. Therefore, the questionnaire was modified to suit the population of this study. The questionnaire focused on eight major areas of problems affecting the principals including preservice training(6 questions), personal problems(6 questions), management problems(22 questions), instructional problems(8 questions),internal relationship problems(8 questions) problem with students(10 questions), external relations problems(11 questions), and general problems(21 questions). The questionnaire also provided a space for the respondents to list other problems they have experienced that were not asked.

3.3 Data analysis

The returned completed survey questionnaires data was first computed into descriptive data including frequencies, central tendencies(mean) and variability(standard deviation) for each sample of principal populations. The frequencies were computed to determine the extent to which problems were experienced. In order to gain a picture of differences in responses between beginning and experienced principals, in each item of the survey the t-test, p-value and d-value(effect size) were computed. The t-test was used to determine the level of statistical significance of the **difference** between means of two samples. The p-value was used to indicate whether there were statistically significant **differences** between two means of the samples. The d-value(effect size) was computed to indicate the practically significance **difference** between the views of the two groups(Borg & Gall, 1989; Cohen, 1988).

4. Results

The results of this study were summarized in two ways. First, attention was given to the computation of the mean score rating of both beginning and experienced principals on the most serious problems facing beginning principals(Table 1). Secondly, an attempt was made to give a picture of interpretation of differences in responses between beginning and experienced principals(Table 2). The study overwhelmingly showed that both beginning and experienced principals faced minor or no difficulties with most of the problems asked in the questionnaire. Therefore, only problems with a mean score of(2,5) on a scale of (4,0) from both groups were highlighted. The 2,5 cut off indicates the most serious problems

experienced.

4.1. Beginning and experienced principals' mean score in rank order on the most serious problems facing beginning principals.

In order to determine the extent to which problems were experienced, the data from each group were computed into descriptive data. Table 1 demonstrates the mean score rating in rank order for both beginning and experienced principals.

4.2 Serious problems facing beginning principals

The areas of major concern were determined as a result of the mean score rank order rating from both beginning and experienced principals. These problems are further discussed, in order of their overall importance for both groups.

Students who cannot pay school fees and buy books

Text books and other reading materials are central to the educational process and primary education is the only hope for many children in some developing countries like Kenya. In Kenya this hope is provided through free primary education for all grades 1-8. However, recent educational reforms in Kenya and the introduction of the 8.4.4 educational system in 1985 calls for cost sharing. This implies that parents are now required to share in the education of their children thus paying fees and providing their children with books. The cost sharing approach is used especially in secondary schools and other institutions of higher learning. Parents must now pay fees and provide books for their children if they want them to continue with secondary education. As such, the socio-economic background of most students as revealed by the high ranking of problems such as students who cannot afford to pay school fees(X1=3,68 & X2=3,44) and buy books(X1=3,41 & X2= 3,10) indicates that most students come from financially disadvantaged families. Beginning principals in such settings are confronted with situations where students not only come to school without fees and books but hungry as well. This presents many beginning principal with a moral and ethical dilemma for they must choose whether it is justifiable to send an hungry child home to get money for fees or let the child study free of charge.

The findings of this study on this problem is supported by the studies of Legotlo(1994) and Dadey and Harber(1993). Legotlo(1994) found that new principals have serious problems with students who cannot buy books(85%) and that 78% had problems with students who cannot pay school fees. Lulat (1988) points to lack of books as one of the problems that make the job of headteachers in Africa very difficult. Dadey and Harber(1993) study found that parents are

responsible for paying fees to help cover educational costs in both Botswana and Ghana, and again it is the head who must ultimately ensure that these are paid. Dadey's(1990) study records headtechers in Ghana regularly dealing with problems created by non-payment of fees.

Shortage of school equipment

The management and provision of quality in and relevant education and training are dependent , inter alia: on the supply of adequate equipment and teaching and learning materials. In Kenya, the procurement and supply of equipment for public schools is done by the District Education Officers(DEOs), purchased with the funds provided by the government. However, as a result of the recent expansion of education in Kenya, it is not possible now for the government to provide adequate funds for the procurement of sufficient equipment, particularly specialized science and technical equipment. Thus, to supplement equipment supplied by the government and in the spirit of cost sharing, parents and communities are required to provide schools with equipment and funds to procure equipment and learning materials. The results of this study, however, show that shortage of school equipment is a serious problem that, not only beginning but experienced principals, must contend with as well(X1=3,51 & X2=2,78). Both groups overwhelmingly indicated that there is an inadequate supply of equipment for teaching and learning of science and vocational subjects. The problem of a shortage of equipment is created not only by the communities unable to provide funds for equipment, but also from difficulties arising from the inability by the districts to procure equipment and supply them to the schools on time(Kamunge, 1988). This shortage of school equipments compounds the challenge for beginning principals for not only are they required to raise money for school equipment, but also money for erecting buildings where such equipment will be stored.

Shortage of physical facilities

The expansion of education in Kenya and the desire to provide quality and relevance in teaching and learning has resulted in calls for provision of educational facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials. With the introduction of vocational subjects in all schools, more science and vocational equipment are required and the equipment already there requires repair, maintenance and storage. However, the careful maintenance and servicing of school equipment including storage is a joint effort of both the Ministry of Education and the community in each school. Notwithstanding, both groups considered shortage of physical facilities to be a serious problem facing beginning principals in a developing countries like Kenya (X1=3,40 & X2=2,61). Although the governments in many developing countries provide for most of the

things the schools need, principals are expected to mobilize the local communities to contribute to physical facilities development. This calls for beginning principals to be equipped with skills on how to organize and mobilize the local communities to raise funds. In Kenya they will need to be equipped with "Harambee"(pull together) skills.

Staff residential accommodation

Kitavi(1993) points out that some teachers in developing countries like Kenya work under very deplorable conditions. Additionally, Kitavi(1993) and Lilat(1988) assert that teachers in some developing countries are overworked, underpaid and sometimes are not paid at all for months. Furthermore, the classrooms they teach in are overcrowded and underfurnished. In this study, both groups of principals rated staff residential accommodation among the serious problems facing beginning principals(X1=3,31 & X2=2,98). With poor working conditions and meager pay, provision of good housing is seen as an incentive by many teachers in developing countries. Therefore, lack of good residential accommodation affects teachers negatively both in motivation and morale. Personal transport is non-existent for many teachers who choose to commute from the nearest urban area to schools located in the remote areas. The poor morale and motivation is most likely to translate into high absenteeism among these commuting teachers and this has negative implications for productivity among teachers as well. This lack of adequate staff accommodation adds another problem for beginning principals in that they will not be able to attract and retain good teachers who see good housing as an incentive for staying in a certain school.

Legotlo(1994) showed that many teachers in developing countries are ill paid and thus see good accommodation as the only fringe benefit provided by their employers. In addition, Legotlo(1994) found that 60% of beginning principals in his study experienced a serious problem with staff accommodation. Therefore, with poor pay and no accommodation, beginning principals as well as experienced principals can hardly attract and retain good teachers and this translates into students poor student performance in their national annual examinations.

Installing telephone

Beginning principals considered telephone communication within and outside the school community an important issue. Unfortunately, beginning principals indicated that installing telephones was among the serious problems facing them(X1=2,82 & X2=2,42). Legotlo's(1994) study records 70% of beginning principals in South Africa have a serious problem with telephone services. Dadey(1990) study found that telephones lines in Botswana are often faulty and

this caused communication problems for head teachers. Most schools in developing countries are without telephone services. Therefore, fast communication for beginning principals is a problem and raising money for telephone installation adds an enormous challenge.

Parents illiteracy

Adult illiteracy is one of the major problems facing developing countries and beginning principals indicated this is a major concern for them(X1=2,79 & X2=2,41). This implies that principals can only communicate verbally with the parents. Calling a meeting for all parents becomes a daunting, time-consuming issue for beginning principals. Literature study indicated that adult literacy is a major problem facing many developing countries.

Students travelling long distances

Some villages in developing countries like Kenya do not have primary schools let alone secondary schools. In such cases student who live far from school have to walk long distances to school. In some cases student from poor families who cannot afford to pay transport costs must decide to either walk to school daily or drop out of school. In situations where students must walk long distances to school, students are excessively absent and come to school late and eventually drop out of schools. Beginning principals in this study agreed that student travelling long distances to get to school were a problem to them as new leaders(X1=2,77 & X2=2,32). In addition, these new principals pointed out that by the time these students got to school they are already exhausted and less motivated to learn. This, in turn, created absenteeism and the lack of a learning culture. Since the effectiveness of principals in Kenya is measured by how well students perform in national examinations, absenteeism, lack of motivation and poor learning culture produce poor examination results and that means trouble for these novice principals.

Lack of playgrounds

Learning without play makes a bright child dull. Hence a playground at a school is as important as textbooks, school equipment, physical facilities and teachers. Regrettably, both groups of principals indicated that this is a serious problem experienced by beginning principals(X1=2,75 & X2= 2,51). Possibly, the problem here is not lack of playground per se, but lack of money for acquiring extra land. Thus, new principals in developing countries like Kenya are not only required to mobilize the community to raise funds for school equipment and physical facilities but funds for acquiring extra land where student can participate in extra-curricular activities like athletics and other out-door sports.

Use of English as a medium of instruction

Language is a system of related categories that both incorporate and perpetuate a particular world view. Language is the foundation of every culture, though languages differ in striking ways. In addition, language and culture are so much interwoven that it is not easy to separate them. Teaching requires that we communicate verbally or nonverbally. In Kenya, as in some other developing countries teachers, are required to instruct students in English. Some students have limited proficiency in English and teachers find it difficult to help them with their academic problems.

English is the official language of Kenya and Swahili is the national language. In addition, each Kenyan child has his/her own enthnic language. Therefore, most Kenyan students grow up with three languages and English is usually their third language. Therefore, they face the challenge of maintaining facility among the three languages. Teachers are required to instruct and test students in English even though it is often the third language that most children acquire. Some students have problems learning their own language aside from difficulties associated with learning English thus compounding the challenges of the students, teachers and especially new principals. In addition, some teachers are not proficient in the English language and one wonders how they can help students who struggle to learn English.

Literature on culture, learning and academic performance show that academic failure can result from environments that do not accommodate individual differences in students including language. Hence, limited English-proficient students, who need instruction in their native tongue but are instructed sorely in English, can expect to experience academic difficulties. The results of this study showed that use of English language as a medium of instruction could hinder the effective learning of some students and both groups of principals(X1=2,58 & X2=2,50) agreed that it is a serious problem they must contend with. This was a concern especially for new principals. Oddly and ironically enough, many schools in developing countries including Kenya use foreign languages as their sole medium of instruction in their schools.

These findings illustrate that using a foreign language as the only medium of instruction has adverse effects on the learning of students. This only compounds the problems of beginning principals in many developing countries who must deal among other things with lack of teachers, lack of classrooms, inadequate facilities, and students who cannot pay school fees and buy books. Furthermore, these findings raise a concern about the extensive use of foreign languages as the only medium of instruction, as is the case in many developing countries including Kenya.

Clean water Problem

Not all schools in Kenya have adequate supply of clean running water especially the schools in remote areas(X1=2,53 & X2=2,14). In such cases the school may have to use the local borehole, water pump or water tank with the local community. Additionally, some of these schools do not have enough funds that could be used to drill boreholes. These circumstances call for beginning principals to mobilize the local community to collect money for the drilling of boreholes.

Locating a suitable social club.

No man is an island and neither are beginning principals. However, beginning principals in this study indicated that they felt like misfits following their appointment to the principalship (X1=2,52 & X2=2,06). In most developing countries, an elevation to a higher position means that one has to cut ties with most of his peers while one looks for a social group of his new status. This cultural norm has adverse effects especially on beginning principals who are appointed and posted to manage schools outside their localities. Since they are outsiders and not "sons" or "daughters" of the soil, it may become a problematic issues before they find where they belong socially.

Inaccessibility of parents

Beginning principals indicated that the inaccessibility of parents is a serious problem facing them(X1=2,50 & X2=1,10). Because of poverty, most parents in developing countries are busy most of the time either looking for the next meal of the day or looking for the next term's school fees. Others are ignorant of parental involvement in their children's education. This implies that beginning principals will at times be confronted with the dilemma of making some crucial decisions on certain students which may create conflicts with the inaccessible parent.

In sum, it appeared from both the subjects of this study that the problems facing beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya are not exactly those identified by the literature on beginning principalship from the developed nations. Rather, the level of their problems was mostly centered on general problems issues which are typical of developing countries. Legotlo's (1994) study on new-appointed principals in South Africa supports the findings of this study. Respondents in his study indicated that their problems were mostly associated with financial difficulties facing developing countries.

These findings serve to underscore what was theorized earlier; that the problems of new principals cannot be generalized and neither

can standard strategies for overcoming these problems be prescribed. Beginning principals in developing countries face problems that are mostly money related. These money related problems create complex management problems for beginning principals since raising money is, for most, one issues not under their jurisdiction.

4.3 A comparison of the views of beginning and experienced principals on problems facing beginning principals.

In order to determine practically and statistically the **difference** between the sample means, the t-test for independent samples, the p-value and the effect size were computed respectively.

Table II displays the responses from the study which indicated a small practically significant difference and a statistically practically significant difference of medium effect size ($p < 0,05$ & $p < 0,01$) between beginning and experienced principals. It was noted that beginning principals found the intensity and magnitude of most of the problems displayed in Table 2 to be more formidable than experienced principals who rated higher only three out of eighteen problems displayed. Experienced principals are aware and more concerned with problems facing beginning principals such as; conducting student meetings, lack of playgrounds and overcrowded classrooms. Such discrepancies between the two groups are not unique considering the differences in experience between them.

The lower ratings of these problems by experienced principals could be attributed to their experience and ability to conceptualize the principalship which has developed overtime. For instance, one experienced principal explained that;

> Having been a head for over twenty years, I have learnt how to handle each and every aspect of the matter in this questionnaire. However, training of heads who are beginning their headship service is absolutely necessary in almost all these areas.

Another experienced principal remarked;

> Having been a principal for so long it is hard to recall all that I experienced as a novice principals. But one thing is sure; that it was not easy and I needed help and your questionnaire addresses these concerns well.

In general, these findings illustrate that beginning principals are aware of the problems facing them. This suggests that beginning principals are not only concerned with the survival and security of their jobs but with the general improvement of schools and instruction as well. Additionally, these findings illustrate the importance of gathering views of experienced principals on problems facing beginning principals. Beginning principals may not be aware

of the extent and intensity of some problems due to lack of experience and "culture shock." In such circumstances, experienced principals could provide a better understanding of the problems based on their experiences and insights.

5. Summary of the findings

In this article, a recent study of the problems facing beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya was presented. Problems facing beginning principals in different levels were examined including preservice training, personal problems, management problems, instructional problems, relationship problems, student problems and general problems.

It was discovered that principals in developing countries like Kenya face problems that are uniquely and typically associated with developing countries and not necessarily problems faced by their counterparts in developed countries. These problems could be ascribed to the failure of educational systems in most developing countries in providing adequate financial support for their schools. The findings of this study is supported by Legotlos'(1994) study which overwhelmingly showed that schools in developing countries like South Africa receive inadequate financial support and this translates into all kinds of problems for beginning principals.

Beginning principals seemed to experience with greater intensity problems facing them and this was illustrated by their higher rating in determining the significance of the difference in response between them and experienced principals. Both the small and medium effect size indicated that beginning principals find these problems challenging and a concern for them.

6 Recommendations.

> Too often and without consideration, principals in developing countries like Kenya are tossed into the job without preservice training, without guarantee for in-service training, and without support from their employers. Some, regrettably, find that their effectiveness and performance are judged according to how little they bother educational officers, including the Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of of Education. Good educational systems, however, ensure that new principals are aware of the values, beliefs and norms of the communities where they are assigned, that they acquire the necessary knowledge, and skills and that they have a vision and share the Ministry of Education's aims and goals. Effective educational systems, therefore, provide the guidance socialization, professional and technical support that help new principals adjust and succeed (Kitavi, 1995).

Most experienced principals in this study indicated that they overcame some of the principalship problems through trial and error. But, trial and error induction strategies are no longer viable, as this study has shown. The findings of this study has shown that new principals cannot be left alone and that ways must be found for minimizing problems facing beginning principals in developing countries. Beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya need well structured induction strategies that will make them effective and efficient educational managers. Without special attention to the entry year problems of beginning principals and principalship in general, other attempts at improving the quality of education in developing countries may yield little results.

Therefore, without pre-service training and in-service training not guaranteed, what beginning principals in developing countries like Kenya need is entry year induction strategies. Induction here is seen as a process through which new principals are helped to adjust to the principalship so that they can be effective and efficient in their job.

To help guide educational systems in developing countries like Kenya in their efforts to help new principals overcome some of the problems in their transition to school leadership, several strategies and recommendations were identified in the study that education officers, the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service can use. These induction strategies are cost and time effective. Hence they take into account the financial problems faced by many educational systems in developing countries like Kenya.

Some of the suggested and recommended strategies for helping new principals in developing countries like Kenya include inter alia:

*** Beginning principal induction program**

An induction program is a well structured comprehensive professional development program with concisely articulated goals designed for the purpose of helping beginning principals to develop among other things; knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to carry their roles effectively. Hence it is a program intended to meet both their needs and those of the educational system(Kitavi, 1995). Kitavi(1995)developed a tailormade comprehensive induction program model for beginning school principals in Kenya. His model has five components spread through-out the first year of the principalship. It includes workshops, seminars, conferences, feedback and evaluation. These workshops, seminars and conferences which are conducted locally at a Teachers' Advisory Center(TAC) address specific problems identified in this study and emphasizes certain skills necessary. The key role-players in conducting this program include all the those with a vested interest in the

success of the school and of the new principal. They include educational officers and representatives from the Ministry of Education, Teachers' Service Commision, School Equipment Production Unit, Kenya National Examination Council, Kenya Institute of Education, Bureau of Education, Kenya Literature Bureau, and Kenya National Union of Teachers.

Mentoring has come to be considered as the panacea for many problems facing new principals. It is one of the cost effective induction strategy. The mentor component is one part of the comprehensive induction program for new principals. Kitavi(1995) recommends that a veteran principals should be assigned to assist the new principal to learn the informal ropes of the job in the first year. The veteran principal's assistance is needed to provide technical advice on various tasks, rules, procedures and expectations in the community, in Zonal, and district educational offices. It also offers the opportunity to have an experienced pro in whom one could confide, seek advice, and discuss problems and concerns.

*** In-service programs and activities**

In-service education and other activities especially for new principals are given less attention in most developing countries, including Kenya. The in-service programs and activities for new principals should be provided locally at the Teachers Advisory Centers(TAC). In Kenya, Teachers Advisory Centers(TACs) have been established in at least every Zonal Educational Office. The role of these TACs should be expanded and be used as Principals Advisory Centers (PACs) also. These TACs/PACs are within walking distances of many schools and provide cost and time effective in-service programs for new principals on a continuing basis.

Other effective induction strategies

In addition to induction and inservice programs, the following strategies are also recommended for helping beginning principals overcome their problems:

*** New principal manuals.**

This study found that there are no manuals provided for new principals. Most principals indicated that manuals would be an invaluable tool for them. A manual should be provided outlining some of the major issues facing new principals. The manual should list include agencies, people and departments that could be of help to the new principal in times of need and problems.

*** out-going principal**

Out-going principals could play a crucial role in making the transition of a new principal smooth. Therefore, orientation by the out-going principal on specific information about the school,s financial status, procedures, personnel, staff strength and weaknesses, identification of key channels of communication with parents, and community relations are important strategies.

*** Orient the new principal to school**

Orientation of the new principals to the school and community at large is paramount. This is important especially for a principal who is considered an outsider and not a "son" or "daughter" of the soil. Successful mobilization of the community to participate in "harambee" (fund raising) activities depends on the politics of a particular community. Therefore, information about the local community leaders should be provided to the new principal. This should be done by the chairman of Parent Teachers Association(PTA) or chairman of the Board of Governors(BOG)

*** Networking**

Principals need the support of other principals. Hence collegiality is a desired goal for professional growth and development. Networking should be controlled by participants. In networking individuals who share the same concerns are given the opportunity to meet and gain support from their colleagues by sharing ideas and experiences. A Kenya National Association of School Principals(KNASP) should be established that offers help to meet the problems facing members of their profession.

*** Shadowing**

This study found that most of the new principals are appointed from the ranks of deputy principals. Therefore, practicing principals should be required to take an active role in preparing deputy principals for principalship. Allowing the deputy principal more responsibilities, for instance, by spending more time standing in for the principal, would afford the deputy the opportunity to experience some of the problems of the principalship.

*** Visiting other schools**

Contact with other schools is important for beginning principals in order for them to know what is happening in those schools and to get a glimse of different school settings. These visits could help the beginning principal compare what is happening in his school with other schools.

*** Courses in Educational management**

Preservice training of principals is not required in many developing countries including Kenya. While studies show that there are some inadequancies in preservice preparation of school principals, the importance of theory in educational management cannot be ignored. Practice without theory to guide it is blind. Therefore universities, teachers colleges and other educational institutions that provide inservice education should be required to offer courses in educational management.

7. Conclusions

In sum, this study has implications for preservice training, recruitment, selection, induction and continued training of beginning and experienced principals in developing countries like Kenya. If effective educational management practices are to be realized by some developing countries like Kenya, current practices of "swim" or "sink" induction strategies for beginning principals must be replaced with well structured strategies that help beginning principals realize their principalship potential. This will result in an overall educational system success for all stakeholders.

Overall, this study has significance not only for Kenya but for other developing countries as well as the international community of researchers. First, given the importance of the principalship and the potential impact of the transition period for first time administrators, this study provides educators, policy makers and program developers in Kenya with a needed description of the kinds of challenges beginning principals face. With a better understanding of problems beginning principals face the Kenya Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Service Commission may consider altering the postelection and induction processes available to beginning principals.

In addition, universities, colleges and other educations institutes involved in the continued training of principals in Kenya may use this study's findings to redesign programs that will assist individuals once they have assumed their first position as principals. Furthermore, the insights of principals in this study may be useful for aspiring principals in helping them to plan their entry process and to seek assistance and information.

On the other hand, since very little is known about problems facing beginning principals in most developing countries, this study tries to fill that gap. Finally, this study makes an important contribution to the general knowledge related to problems of new educational leaders, from an international comparative perspective.

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Table I: Beginning and experienced principals' mean score in rank order on the most serious problems facing beginning principals

	Beginning principals		Experienced principals	
Problem	$\bar{X}1$	**Rank**	$\bar{X}2$	**Rank**
Student who cannot pay school fees	3,68	1	3,44	1
Shortage of school equipment	3,51	2	2,78	4
Students who cannot buy books	3,41	3	3,10	2
Shortage of physical facilities	3,40	4	2,61	5
Staff residential accommodation	3,31	5	2,98	3
Installing telephones	2,82	6	2,06	12
Parents illiteracy	2,79	7	2,42	8
Students travelling long distances	2,77	8	2,32	10
Lack of playground	2,75	9	2,51	6
Use of English as a medium of instruction	2,58	10	2,50	7
Clean water problem	2,53	11	2,41	9
Locating suitable social club	2,52	12	1,10	13
Inaccessibility of parents	2,50	13	2,14	11

$\bar{X}1$ Beginning principal's mean score

$\bar{X}2$ Experienced principals' mean score

Table II: Differences in responses between beginning and experienced principals on problems facing beginning principals

PROBLEM	Beginning Principals Mean score $\bar{X}1$	Experienced Principals Mean score $\bar{X}2$	$\bar{S}1$	$\bar{S}2$	t	P	d
Lack of experience as acting principal	1,758	1,471	0,824	0,675	2,169	0,032 X	0,35 .
Housing for your family	2,000	1,500	1,208	0,983	2,640	0,009 XX	0,413 .
Locating a school for your children	2,359	1,676	1,277	1,021	3,436	0,001 XX	0,532 ..
Dealing with previous head's influence	2,188	1,739	1,052	0,799	2,774	0,007 XX	0,563 ..
Conducting student meetings	1,175	1,373	0,422	0,652	-2,153	0,033 X	0,306 .
Student absenteeism	2,375	2,013	1,016	0,797	2,307	0,023 X	0,364 .
Shortage of physical facilities	3,406	2,618	0,706	1,032	5,333	0,001 XX	0,767 ..
Staff residential accommodation	3,313	2,986	0,906	0,999	2,009	0,047 X	0,320 .
Students travelling long distances	2,766	2,329	1,649	1,081	2,265	0,025 X	0,378 .
Installing telephones	2,828	2,067	1,893	1,131	3,848	0,002 XX	0,639 ..
Parents illiteracy	2,797	2,427	1,011	1,016	2,148	0,034 X	0,364 .
Geographical location of the school	2,207	1,560	1,086	0,889	3,778	0,000 XX	0,589 ..
Lack of mailing facilities	1,688	1,360	0,906	0,709	2,342	0,021 X	0,364 .
Students that cannot pay school fees	3,677	3,442	0,533	0,752	2,174	0,032 X	0,319 .
Students that cannot buy books	3,477	3,108	0,812	1,001	2,396	0,018 X	0,380 .
Shortage of school equipment	3,508	2,787	0,687	0,949	5,194	0,001 XX	0,759 ..
Lack of playgrounds	2,754	2,280	1,061	1,047	2,651	2,650 XX	0,442 .
Overcrowded classrooms	1,563	1,933	0,794	0,949	-2508	0,013 X	0,389 .

. Small effect

.. Medium effect

X $p < 0,05$

XX $p < 0,01$

The following guidelines were adopted in the interpretation of the effect size(Cohen, 1988)

. = d = 0,2 (Small effect)

.. = d = 0,5 (Medium effect)

... = d = 0,8 (Large effect)

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